Getting a website out of the door

(aka Managing a website project)

Rob Allen

Rob Allen?

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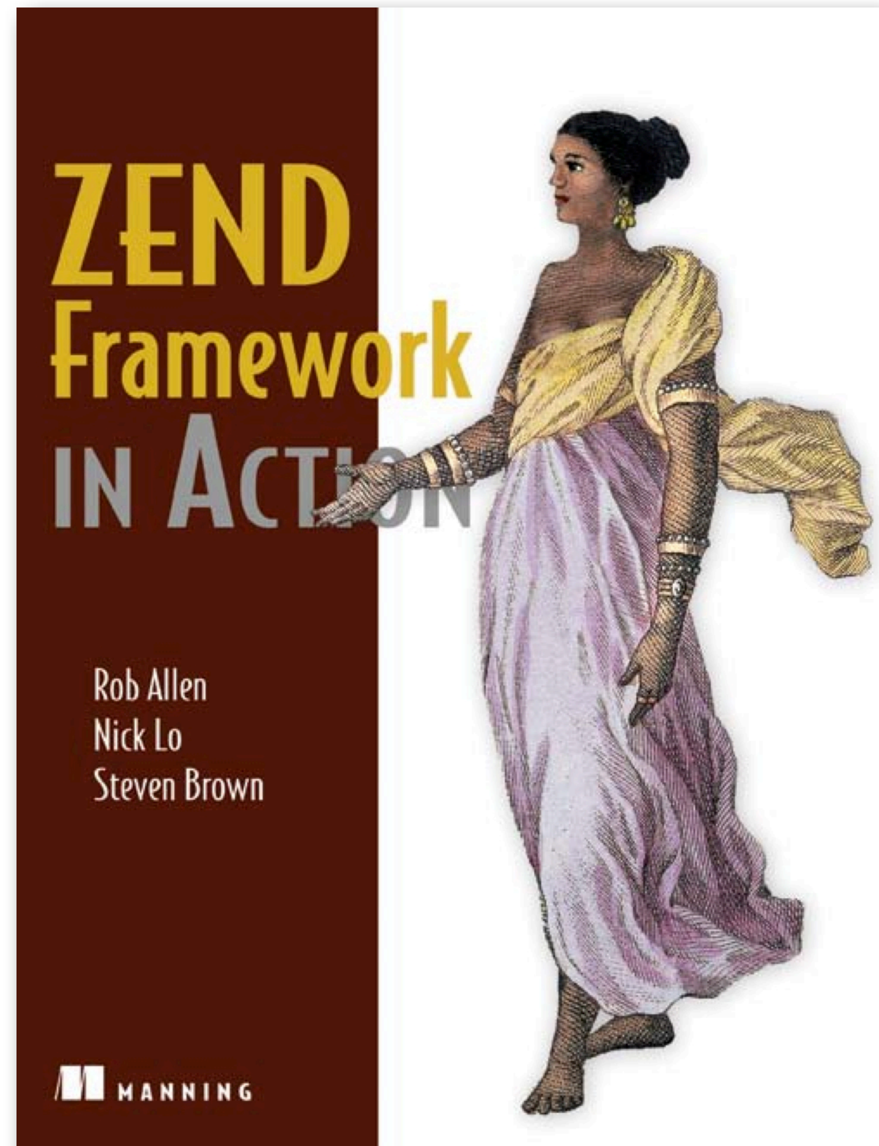

ZEND
Framework
IN ACTION
Rob Allen
Nick Lo
Steven Brown
MANNING

What is a website project?

Project stages

- Pre-sales and quotation
- Kick-off meetings
- Planning
- Designing the website
- Development
- Build
- Managing change
- Go live and closure

Pre-sales & quotation

Pre-sales process

What we do:

- Outline document
- Quotation

What the client does:

- Accepts the quote and gives go-ahead
- Signs contract

Kick-off meetings

Kick-off with client

My chance to meet the client!

- Find out what client thinks they have bought
- Discuss design and scope requirements

Kick-off with team

My attempt to motivate the team!

- Excite & motivate the team about the project
- Discuss design and scope requirements

Planning

Technical Requirements Specification

Writing the TRS

- Fit to the size of the job
- You have to work at getting the details
- It's up to you to ask the right questions
- Use version numbers

What’s in a TRS?

- Purpose of site
- Domain names
- Browser compatibility & requirements
- Site outline
- Site breakdown

Project plan

Creating the plan

- Break into ***deliverables***
- Find the dependencies
- Estimate how long each bit will take
- Add contingency
- Write it up into a nice list

Estimating time

- Be honest - estimating just guessing!
- The person doing the job creates the estimate
  - Get three times: best case, realistic, worst case
  - Pick the one you believe!
- Add contingency based on risks

Technical setup items

- Development specification
- Project Issues tracker
- Product bug tracker

The build stage

Visuals

- Decide what you need
- Do you need a style guide?
- Present to client in a meeting
- Revision merry-go-round is the designers problem!

- Client approval (eventually!)

Execution of the plan

Keeping track

Email

- Subject line
- Summary at the top
- Indicate action needed
- Set a due date for action

Meetings

- Write an agenda
- Minimise the number of people
- Ensure everyone speaks
- Keep it short!
- Never overrun
- Send out minutes afterwards

Managing change

Types of change

- New request
- Undocumented requirement

Change control process

- Write down the request
- Understand the impact
- Decide whether to do it
- Do the work!

Handling disputes

- Revisit TRS
- If client is right, apologise!
- If not in scope:
  - do it anyway cos it's the "right" thing to do
  - point at contract and negotiate!

Go live and closure

Go live

Closing the project

- Check all is done
- Ensure client is satisfied
- Send invoice
- Review project
- Party!

Thank you

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